



Office of the Deputy Attorney General
Washington, D.C. 20530

April 29, 2019

Dear Mr. President:

The Department of Justice made rapid progress in achieving the Administration's law enforcement priorities – reducing violent crime, curtailing opioid abuse, protecting consumers, improving immigration enforcement, and building confidence in the police – while preserving national security and strengthening federal efforts in other areas. We staffed the Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorneys' Offices with skilled and principled leaders devoted to the values that make America great. By consulting stakeholders, implementing constructive policies, reducing bureaucracy, and using results-driven management, we maximized the public benefit of our \$28 billion budget. Productivity rose, and crime fell.

Our nation is safer, our elections are more secure, and our citizens are better informed about covert foreign influence efforts and schemes to commit fraud, steal intellectual property, and launch cyberattacks. We also pursued illegal leaks, investigated credible allegations of employee misconduct, and accommodated congressional oversight without compromising law enforcement interests. I commend our 115,000 employees for their accomplishments and their devotion to duty. As Thomas Paine wrote, "Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must undergo the fatigues of supporting it."

The median tenure of a Deputy Attorney General is 16 months, and few serve longer than two years. As I submit my resignation effective on May 11, I am grateful to you for the opportunity to serve; for the courtesy and humor you often display in our personal conversations; and for the goals you set in your inaugural address: patriotism, unity, safety, education, and prosperity, because "a nation exists to serve its citizens." The Department of Justice pursues those goals while operating in accordance with the rule of law. The rule of law is the foundation of America. It secures our freedom, allows our citizens to flourish, and enables our nation to serve as a model of liberty and justice for all.

At the Department of Justice, we stand watch over what Attorney General Robert Jackson called "the inner ramparts of our society – the Constitution, its guarantees, our freedoms and the supremacy of law." As a result, the Department bears a special responsibility to avoid partisanship. Political considerations may influence policy choices, but neutral principles must drive decisions about individual cases. In 1940, Jackson explained that government lawyers "must at times risk ourselves and our records to defend our legal processes from discredit, and to maintain a dispassionate, disinterested, and impartial enforcement of the law." Facing "corrosive skepticism and cynicism concerning the administration of justice" in 1975, Edward Levi urged us to "make clear by word and deed that our law is not an instrument of partisan purpose, and it is not ... to be used in ways which are careless of the higher values ... within us all." In 2001, John Ashcroft called for "a professional Justice Department ... free from politics ... uncompromisingly fair ... defined by integrity and dedicated to upholding the rule of law."

We enforce the law without fear or favor because credible evidence is not partisan, and truth is not determined by opinion polls. We ignore fleeting distractions and focus our attention on the things that matter, because a republic that endures is not governed by the news cycle.

We keep the faith, we follow the rules, and we always put America first.

Sincerely,

Rod J. Rosenstein